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stand protected from insects: hence his title 'he of the heap of hot ashes' (*ngwakyewa*, *vide supra*, p. 34). The protection of their cattle from raiders by day, and witches by night, was one of the main co-operative activities of the village, and each herd-group within the village was particularly concerned with the protection of its own cattle. For the boys of one herd-group the association is very close since they are together on the pasturage for the greater part of the day. Friendships then formed sometimes last a lifetime.

A few rich men choose to herd their cattle separately from those of their neighbours. 'They are the men who have many cattle! They want to show off their herd, so that men may say: "That's the herd of so and so."' Sometimes their sons, against orders, foregather with other herd-boys on the pasturage, but they are careful to bring home the herds separately. We knew three men near Rungwe who were spoken of as herding their cattle separately, though in fact their sons often joined friends in the pasturage. To herd alone is regarded as somewhat ostentatious,[1] and only a few individuals do it.

Many rich men do not even keep all their cattle at their homesteads for fear of the jealous witchcraft of their neighbours. Instead, they disperse their herds among friends in other villages (of their own or neighbouring chiefdoms) believing that the cattle may in that way escape danger. Porokoto explained: 'We place cattle with friends (*ubwikifye*) on account of sickness and death. Supposing I have three or four cows, and they all calf, but the calves die, then I place the cows with friends. People say: "The cows will escape in another village or chiefdom." If, when cattle die and are cut up, wounds are found in their stomachs,[2] then the owner places the others with friends.' Not all of them are sent to the same place.

The fear of witchcraft was traditionally, and is still, the main reason for placing out cattle, but nowadays they are sent away for other reasons also: Nyakyusa living around Rungwe often send cattle to friends on the other side of the mountains in Mbeya district, where grazing is particularly good, and wealthy Christians place out cattle because their wives, working single-handed,

[1] A beast which grows others may be herded apart without any imputation of pride to the owner.

[2] Taken as evidence that they have been killed by witchcraft, *vide infra*, p. 116.

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ukwangala is only possible between contemporaries[1] they must build with contemporaries. The value set on *ukwangala* is thus related to the age-village; male contemporaries build together, and the company of, and good fellowship with, his age-mates is what creates a man of wisdom and character. Such is the Nyakyusa view of society.

For conversation to flow merrily and discussion to be profound there must be *ifyakwangalila*—'the wherewithal for good fellowship', that is, food and drink—and very great stress is laid on sharing these. Men and boys are expected to eat regularly with age-mates. Traditionally, fathers and sons never ate or drank together—to do so was held to be incompatible with the respect due from son to father—and men sought the company of equals at meals. From the time a small boy begins to herd he is encouraged to bring home two or three friends to eat with him, and in turn he visits each of them. Since boys have no fields of their own until they marry, but co-operate in cultivation with their parents, it is to their own mothers they go for food, and parents are proud of a son bringing many friends. 'Perhaps', said Angombwike, 'a son will come with his friends and cut a huge bunch of bananas, and take thick milk and eat with them. When the father comes back his wives will tell him: "Your son has eaten all the thick milk and cut a banana bunch!" Then he will ask: "How many men were with my son?" "Six!" "Ah, he's a chief!" the old man will say, smiling proudly.' 'And formerly if a young man came home often alone to eat, his father would beat him, or even take a spear and wound him, and when people asked why he would say: "This great fool comes *alone* to my place, again and again." It is good to eat with friends, for boys to go round in groups of four or five.'

After marriage each man is cooked for by his own wife, but he continues to eat with his friends, bringing them to his home or going to their's. The first wife to come to a young men's village is said to have a hard life. 'She has to draw water and cook for all the young men of the village—they come to drink, and to wash, and they beat her with a stick if she refuses them. No, the

[1] *Ukwangala* is sometimes used with reference to relatives as well as to village-mates, as in the phrase '*atakwangala bamama nabakolwa bake*', meaning 'he is not on good terms with his relatives'; but in its fullest sense it can only be used with reference to contemporaries.

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poraries, the men of the village. They are forbidden to enter her hut, and if she catches sight of one outside she turns away from him and shields her face with a mat. And at the end of the seclusion each 'village father', as well as her own father, must make her a small gift, before she will greet him. The co-wives and some of the village neighbours of the bride's mother form the group of 'mothers' who treat and instruct the bride, help to provide food for the feasts, and finally take her to her husband. Not all the village neighbours are expected to cook for the marriage feasts of a commoner's daughter, only immediate neighbours and special friends (together with relatives) who have been asked to do so; but if an immediate neighbour is not invited to help he will feel affronted. Twijulege explained that 'If the owner of the homestead overlooks someone who has built close to him, and does not say to him, "They are coming to bring the marriage-cattle for *your* child, please help us to cook", then that friend will be angry, and will think to himself, "Perhaps we are not on good terms (*tutikwangala kawuwa*) though I had always thought we were", and he will say to the father of the bride: "Why did you not tell me that they were coming to bring the marriage-cattle for your child that I might help you with the food? I was startled by the rejoicing." ' An old man who had only called one friend, besides relatives and the 'best man', to help cook at the marriage of his daughter, was stigmatized as 'a surly fellow who does not care about being on good terms with people'.

The groom, on his part, is supported by his village-mates, who come in a crowd driving the marriage-cattle, and dancing the stamping marriage dance (*ukukanya ngonya*). His mother, who has a share in the ritual and brings gifts of food, follows him, accompanied by some of her co-wives and village neighbours.

Village solidarity is thus exhibited at ceremonies, not only in the allocation of food, but by the manner in which village contemporaries of the same sex rally to each other's help, dance together and, if need be, fight together.

Besides offering sympathy and help when their fellow is in need, it is the duty of neighbours to give him advice, and persuade him to act wisely. If, for example, a man has delayed very long in providing marriage-cattle for his son, his neighbours take the son's part, and try to persuade him to give the cattle. 'Perhaps', said one informant, 'the son may elope with a girl, and

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then if the father says his son has done wrong his neighbours reply: "You have caused him to do wrong yourself. Did you suppose him to be a boy that you did not provide marriage-cattle for him?" Then the father becomes more ready to pay damages for his son.' And again, 'If a young man finds that his father objects to his marrying the girl he loves, he complains to his father's neighbours (*pamafumu abapalamani ba gwize*). Then they discuss the matter and say to the father: "Do you want him to teach you a lesson by taking a chief's wife or daughter, for whom many cattle must be given?" So the father agrees.'

Neighbours are concerned, too, to see a fair distribution of a deceased fellow's estate, and the fulfilment of the heir's obligations to his wards. 'It is not the relatives, but "the fathers of the village" who watch over a young boy's interests when his father is dead' (*vide infra*, p. 106). We listened to one discussion of a quarrel over inheritance which was believed to have led to kinsmen working sorcery against each other. At this discussion four village neighbours of the sick man (thought to be suffering from the sorcery of his father's brother's son), as well as ten relatives, attended.

The father's neighbours are also asked to mediate when a son has wronged his father and seeks forgiveness. For example, Mwangobola's son had committed adultery with his father's wife. He paid six head of cattle and then went off to the coast, where he remained a long time. When he returned he brought two cows and approached his father's neighbours, asking them to take the cows to his father. When they took the cows his father said: 'He must find a bull as well, and brew beer, because he is my eldest son.' So he got a bull and brewed beer, and the father also brewed. 'Then', said the old man who reported the case, 'the fathers of the village came together and the bull was killed and they ate the meat and drank the beer. . . . Thus the son made friends with his father.'

Here we have the ritual of reconciliation between relatives in which neighbours of the senior must participate, for their anger is held to be as dangerous to the junior as that of his senior relative. Informal giving of advice merges into the practice of arbitration, and of murmuring against a wrong-doer, and thus, it is thought, causing him misfortune. These latter practices are discussed in ensuing chapters.

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tion is already as important beyond as within the village, and village control over the main cash crops has not been established, as it was over certain food crops. With increasing centralization the village headman, embodiment of the solidarity and relative autonomy of each village, is losing power to the chiefs and courts, on the one hand, and to the specialist agriculturalists, school teachers, elders, and ministers of religion on the other.

Friendships beyond the age-village are fostered by common experiences at a boarding school or a labour centre, and by common interests as members of a church or a coffee co-operative which does not necessarily include fellow villagers. And most important of all, fellow villagers are not bound to one another in resistance to external dangers as they were formerly. Lion, leopard, and buffalo still exist in the district, but we heard of no recent case of a village combining for defence against dangerous (as distinct from destructive) game: if action were necessary a European sportsman was usually glad of the chance of a hug. With the cessation of cattle-raiding and inter-village warfare, the curtailment of the right of self-help, and the development of courts with power to enforce judgement in cases involving members of different *chiefdoms*, dependence on fellow villagers for protection from material dangers and the responsibility of a village for the actions of its members, virtually cease. A sense of dependence upon neighbours for mystical protection lingers, but as elementary education, belief in Christian dogma, and the solidarity of Christian congregations increase, this supposed dependence upon the *amaaga* or mystical power of neighbours also lessens. Many men who fear sorcery (including poisoning) do not fear witchcraft, and it is only against witches that neighbours are believed to protect one. Thus change in the form of beliefs is correlated with the development of more intense relationships beyond the village.

An age-village organization is probably dependent upon isolation in another fashion also: by their own account the Nyakyusa feeling that close association between successive generations is improper has been blunted by the example of Europeans and Swahili who do not share this feeling (*vide supra*, p. 69). The missionaries teach that avoidance between father- and daughter-in-law is unnecessary, if not in itself sinful, and the implication is that only 'superstition' maintains the taboo (*vide*

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those of very young children. 'He goes because it is his subject 643
who has died: he is like the senior kinsman of the whole country, 764
he rules all.' 'If a chief omits to go to a burial people say nothing, they know that he is always going to burials and they think that perhaps he has some urgent business. But if he constantly misses burials then people say that he has no affection for his people, that he does not come to bury them as is fit; and if a chief hears them saying this then he is ashamed.' Sometimes a chief who is busy will send a son to represent him. And he sends the drums to beat the lament. 'The drum is the chief . . . they cannot beat the drum before the chief has spoken.'

Besides the chief, the villagers, the relatives, and the drummers, 764
there come also personal friends of the dead man from other vil- 572 •
lages and chiefdoms. And beyond all these there often come others 571
who are attracted not so much by grief and sympathy, nor even by the obligation to express those feelings, but rather by the dancing, the crowds and the possibility of getting some meat to eat. Not all those who come stay the whole three or four days, while the relatives who live at a distance often do not arrive until the second or third day.

The Nyakyusa believe that in order to protect the living and 763
avenge the dead it is most important to discover the cause of death. To do this they summon a doctor to perform an autopsy,[1] an operation fearful and repugnant, but felt to be necessary. The symptoms are interpreted in terms of witchcraft or sorcery, or other supposed causes of disease.

On the first, or early on the second, day after death, the burial 764
takes place. The grave is dug in the sweptt and beaten earth that immediately surrounds the hom. The first spit of earth is always turned by the eldest son of the one who has died. At one burial we saw the young eldest son of a dead man being helped to do this. He was too small to manage a hoe by himself so he caught the handle near the blade while an older relative held it behind to steady it for him. The digging after the first spit is done by a skilled grave-digger, who may be a kinsman or not, with the help of others. The grave is ten or more feet deep with a cave at the bottom to one side. Some graves are oblong, some round or oval,

[1] This is certainly traditional, cf. D. Kerr-Cross, 'Ocean Lakes North of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, V (1895), p. 119. The custom is also reported for the Nyamwanga. For a description of the autopsy, cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 247-50. [171]

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dead man'. Sometimes, immediately after the burial, the chief mourners, both men and women, wail outside near the newly-filled grave.

Very many of the women relatives, a few of the men relatives, and some of the neighbours smear their heads and faces with mud or pot-black as a sign of grief (*kw kasa*). Such an expression of grief is thought extravagant by the Christians who have themselves abandoned the custom. One Christian explained: 'The pagans smear themselves with mud because they tremble with fear at a death—but we do not tremble; the pagans are very sorrowful because they say: "Our friend has vanished from our eyes and we shall never meet him happily again." '

It is also the custom for the women relatives to bind one another's bellies with strips of bark-cloth, and for their woman friends to bind them also. These bark-cloth belts are called *amakiba* and symbolize the fearful grief and mutual sympathy of the mourners, and the sympathy of their friends. One women, who was taking two belts to tie up the bellies of two mourning friends whose husband had died, explained: 'I give them these to tie round their bellies because they are all a-tremble, they are full of fear.' And when she was asked why men did not thus support one another, she replied: 'They are not afraid like women, they do not tremble much.' But there is evidence that, before the coming of the Europeans, men also wore *amakiba* 'and even now if a chief dies his men often wear *amakiba* for one day'. The Christian women have kept the custom, but they emphasize more the aspect of sympathy and less that of fear. 'If a woman wears many belts at a burial that means she has many friends; her passionate grief is comforted by their friendship.'

Sometimes on the first day, and usually on the last two or three days of a burial, there is dancing as well as wailing. Dancing begins late in the morning to the accompaniment of three or four drums, in the swept courtyard of the dead man's homestead; gradually it attracts more and more dancers, more and more of the attention of the onlookers, until the wailing is confined to the chief women mourners inside the hut, and the dance is the most conspicuous part of the proceedings. It is led by young men dressed in a special costume of ankle-bells and cloth skirts and, traditionally, bedaubed with red and white clay. All hold spears and leap wildly about, stamping down the soft earth of the grave as they dance. There is little common movement, each dances

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herd. But if he has not left sufficient, then they are ashamed not to make good the deficiency. 'If no cows are killed at a burial we others [non-relatives] say that it was a mean burial, that the dead man was a pauper without kin, for if he had had kinsmen they would have killed cows for him. So then the relatives grieve their poor grief alone, we others don't go to that burial.' To a poor burial the members of the same village do in fact come, as they are obliged to do; but few other people come, and there is seldom any dancing.

There is one other situation in which a member of the family is under obligation to kill. If the dead man is buried by his 'father' at his 'father's' place, then one of his 'father's' cows must be killed. But if his 'father' does not choose to exercise his privilege of carrying the body to his place for burial (and he need not do so unless he wishes), then there is no such obligation.

Upon affines, however, the obligation is absolute, unless they actually have not got a cow or bull available. 'If a father-in-law brings no beast to his son-in-law's burial, then his daughter is estranged from him, she asks angrily why he does not bring one, seeing that her husband has died.' 'If a son-in-law does not bring a cow to his father-in-law's burial, though he has one that he might have brought, he is ashamed before men. They say to him: "Your wife's father has died, why did you not bring a cow? Perhaps you think you have a father-in-law still alive (i.e. the dead man's heir, to whom all previous obligations are due, and with whom the relationship of affinity continues very much as before), but he himself, your own father-in-law, has died."' And thus, if insufficient cows are killed to maintain the family dignity, both the family and the affines are made to feel ashamed.

Occasionally a friend of the dead man, who is no relative, brings a bull to kill, as a sign of friendship and affection, but he has no obligation to do so.

Social position, both in its practical aspect of authority and in its emotion aspect of prestige, depends primarily, among the Nyakyusa, on the generous use of wealth, or, to put it more simply, on feeding people. The Nyakyusa insisted on this again and again in explaining the relative status of different people: one man is great and distinguished (*asiya*) because he feeds people, another who feeds people less is less distinguished. At a lavish funeral, where many people gather and eat meat, they go home in

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582 they sometimes do so before the relationship is discovered, and then simply drink a protective medicine but do not break the marriage. The old men speak of a now abandoned custom of preferential cross-cousin marriage.

604 The bond between a man and his mother's brother (*omujomi*) is mainly constituted by the passage of cattle. "My real mother's brother," they say "is the one who took the bulk of the marriage-cattle which my father gave for my mother", and it is between this particular brother and a woman's eldest son that the bond is strongest. Because this brother of his mother has taken "our cattle" and married with them the young man has a certain right of making free with his property during his life, the right to receive from him one cow to set up a herd of his own with, and a residuary right of inheritance if this uncle dies childless and leaves no brothers. If his mother's brother does die without other heirs, it is only the particular wife obtained with and the particular progeny of his father's marriage-cattle that the young man can claim.

602 Ceremonies, and particularly funerals, are the occasions on which
769 the effective relatives of any one family meet all together, both kinsmen and affines. I have even heard kinship defined by attendance at funerals: One man argued that he was not related to another because, though they were admittedly genealogically related they did not attend the funerals in each other's families and were not therefore really kinsmen at all.

602 Known blood-kinship is a common occasion of friendship, but it
● 572 does not necessarily produce it, while the absence of friendship can render many of the normal kinship bonds quite inoperative. We have seen already that quarrels may destroy the relationship between half-brothers and lead to a judicial separation. On the other hand, I have observed two men meet for the first time, discover a common great-grandfather and at once become friends. A few months later the sister of one of them died and the other went to the funeral and behaved there like a close kinsman.

Proximity is another factor of great importance in the relations of kinship, for while closeness of dwelling does not always make for friendship, yet a considerable distance tends to lessen it and to make attendance at funerals impossible.

606 One of the most stringent taboos in Nyakyusa life is that which separates father and daughter-in-law. A woman may never speak to, approach, or look at her husband's father. If she does it is believed that she will die, through the witchcraft of indignant neighbours, a painful and lingering death. And the taboo is extended from her own father-in-

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857 to twelve neighbours are usually herded together by their young sons; and so these boys spend all the day together for several years of their lives. This group of boys is the germ of the future age-village; it is a community with a common activity in the herding of the cattle, with a leader and with laws and customs of its own.

"When we herd cows as boys" a friend of mine told me "there is always one who is obeyed by his fellows whatever he says. No one chooses him, he gains his leadership and his prestige by bodily strength. For always, when we are all boys together among the cows, we vie with one another and dispute about going to turn back straying cattle or about fetching fire to cook the food we have brought with us. And so we start fighting, and we go on fighting until one of us beats all his fellows completely and so becomes the leader. And then it is he who sends the others to turn back straying cattle, to fetch fire and to collect firewood. And he is greatly respected. He settles quarrels too. What we quarrel about most as boys is a particular insult; one says to another: 'You are only a child, you are, I am your senior.' This is always happening and then it is the part of the one who is leader to set those two on to fight. We all stand round and watch and the one who first cries is proved the child."

The herd-boys of my own acquaintance, a group of eleven altogether, told me that besides insulting one another like this, boys often cause trouble in their little community by stealing cow-bells from one another's cattle and hiding them away for future use. And one day, when I visited the local herd, the leader of the herd-boys told me they had caught two boys drowning a sheep that morning so as to be able to pretend it had drowned itself by accident, and then they would have had some of the meat to eat. "We beat them very much," he told me, and he called one [141] of the culprits to come and exhibit his wounds. The leader further explained to me that such cases would not ever be reported at home, unless the culprits themselves complained to their parents that they had been unjustly beaten, "then," he said, "I should explain what they had done, and they would get beaten again!"

The time that is not spent in herding cows, in arranging and watching duels and in punishing wrong-doers, is spent in playing various games, occasionally in pocket battles with neighbouring herd-boys, and in cooking and eating small amounts of food brought from home.

857 572 Friendships formed between members of this group sometimes last a lifetime. An old man once said to me of a friend of his who had died: "We herded cows together when we were boys."